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REPORT

CD NO.

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY Satellites

DATE OF INFORMATION 1949

SUBJECT Sociological - Public health

DATE DIST. 2 Jun 1949

HOW PUBLISHED Weekly newspaper

NO. OF PAGES 2

WHERE PUBLISHED Moscow

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

DATE PUBLISHED 1 May 1949

LANGUAGE Russian

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SOURCE Meditinskiy Rabotnik, No 17, 1949.PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE SATELLITE COUNTRIES

V. Vologdina

Large-scale socialist reorganization has been carried out in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, and Poland. Socialist governments permitted these countries to adopt a planned economy, and at the same time develop various public services, such as the public health service, along new and more effective lines.

Many of these countries did not have any state-supported public health program. Czechoslovakia for example, in 1949, spent 31.8 million crowns on its Ministry of Health, while various military organizations were given a budget of 2.25 billion crowns. For that same year, 2 percent of the Rumanian budget was earmarked for health and hygiene purposes. Since the war, however, the budget allotted for public health measures has grown steadily. In 1948, more than 20 percent of the Bulgarian budget was assigned for public health uses. The Public Health Service alone was allotted 4.427 million lev. Local people's councils spent 821 million lev of the budget for maintenance of public health stations and local hospitals. The 1949 budget is three times the 1948 budget.

The Czechoslovak public health budget for 1949 is 26 million crowns, about 20 percent of the total government budget. In Poland, about 40 percent of the annual budget has been earmarked for schools, science, art, and public health.

Before the enlightenment of the workers in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Albania, there was no definite worker's insurance program. Now, however, each industrial enterprise has to provide for worker's insurance, and the workers themselves do not have to contribute from their wages. The Czechoslovak government adopted such a "compulsory" insurance plan in the 1948 National Assembly.

Medical aid in these countries is not limited to the workers, but is also available to the members of their families. The health requirements of the workers have made it necessary to expand the public health network. Thus, in 1948, Albania had eight hospitals with a total of 810 beds. By the end of 1948, however, there were 12 with a total of 2,180 beds, 24 dispensaries, and 28 women's consultation clinics and maternity homes.

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The number of malaria patients in the 10-year period decreased noticeably. A number of completely equipped medical institutions has been established in Bulgaria. In 1948, the public health network increased 32 percent over 1944.

In Hungary, the State Social Security Institute established dispensaries in the industrial centers of Szepel, Ujpest, Kecskemet, Kispest, and others. A 400-bed hospital is being built in Szeged. A 1948 census showed that there were more than 18,000 medical workers in Hungary. Plans now call for a new medical institute to be established in 1949.

The Rumanian government has nationalized all the hospitals and apothecaries within its borders. A nation-wide census of medical workers and enterprises was made. It was determined that there were more than 13,000 medical workers in Bucharest alone. Today, there is a comprehensive anti-VD program, and much is being done to help children suffering from tuberculosis. A start has been made in eradicating malaria in Rumania. Starting 2 May, a survey is to be made of more than 500 towns and villages to determine the spread of this disease. More than 100 marshy regions are going to be treated, and 60 malaria stations will be set up in locations where the malaria rate is highest.

Much has been accomplished in Poland. Many new regional and mobile polyclinics have been established, and most of the large industrial centers now have their own medical enterprise. B. V. Petrovskiy, chief of the delegation of Soviet Medical Workers, who attended a meeting of the Professional Union of Public Health Service Workers, remarked that despite the many difficulties to be surmounted, the Polish medical workers are doing an excellent job.

Health resorts in Czechoslovakia have been nationalized. Some of the largest, among them Karlovy Vary, Frantiskovy Lazne, and Marianske Lazne, are to be used as rest homes for the working class.

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